

La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council
Funds Remaining in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2010 Funding Plan

ACCESS TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Background: The approved State Fiscal Year 2010 Regional Funding Plan includes **\$300,000** to expand access to quality child care through a cross-regional pilot study of cost reduction and support strategies. The pilot study was cancelled because other regions re-allocated funds to emergency child care scholarships. These funds remain available for expanding access to quality early care and education. The following are options the Regional Council may wish to consider:

Option 1 – Amend the current contract with the Association for Supportive Child Care (ASCC) for the implementation of the Planning, Start-up and Quality Improvement Grants to increase the amount of funds available for provider support. The purpose of this contract is to increase the number of child care slots in quality settings. This change would increase the funding available for provider support through this contract from \$126,392 to \$426,392.

Option 2 – Pursue an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to act as the administrative home to increase the number of children who receive quality early care and education services through school district Pre-K programs. In order to prepare the agreement there are several areas the Council will need to consider:

- Will participating schools be pre-selected or would there be a competitive process? (For example, we could select school districts where no regulated care currently exists.)
- Should children served be all children age three to five or just three and four year olds?
- Should there be a requirement for a match from public schools? What percent?

Option 3 – Amend the state contract for Quality First to fund additional slots in the region. Quality First is a child care quality improvement program. Recipients receive an assessment of current quality, a coach to help work on quality improvement, and incentives to assist in implementing improvement plans. There were 26 applications for the 8 state-funded slots in the La Paz/Mohave Region. This increase would buy the region an additional 10 sites at an estimated cost of \$29,480 per center. The following are the per-slot costs for Quality First:

Per Facility Cost for Quality First
 Estimate as of 10/28/08

	Enrollment Bonus	Improvement Grant	Improvement Award	TEACH Scholarships ¹	TEACH Administration ²	Fixed Costs (from Below)	TOTAL
Homes	250	3500	500	1600	300	16800	\$ 22,950.00
Small Centers (1-50)	500	7500	1000	3200	625	16800	\$ 29,625.00
Medium Centers (51-150)	500	10000	1000	3200	625	16800	\$ 32,125.00
Large Centers (151 +)	500	15000	1000	3200	625	16800	\$ 37,125.00

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Fixed Costs for Quality First (Regardless of Facility Size)

	Actual	Budget Estimate
Administration	\$ 458.75	500
Assessment	\$ 4,067.55	4100
Coaching	\$ 6,136.46	6200
Evaluation	\$ 2,020.40	2000
CCHC ³	\$ 4,000.00	4000
TOTAL	\$ 16,683.17	\$ 16,800.00

Option 4: Create a new strategy or allocate the funds to another strategy in the plan.

HEALTH

Background: The Regional Council allocated \$501,896 to preventive health strategies; however only \$238,534 was recommended for award through the preventive health RFGA process. This leaves **\$263,362** available to expand access to preventive health programs. The following are options the Regional Council may wish to consider:

Option 1 – An Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) has been completed with the Department of Health Services (DHS) for statewide implementation of the First Things First Early Childhood Provider Loan Repayment and Stipend Program. Regional Councils can allocate funds to this strategy to recruit a variety of allied health professionals into communities where known shortages exist. Two components have been developed. The first component of the program will pay off portions of education loans taken out by Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational or Physical Therapists, Child Psychologists, and Mental Health Specialists with certifications in infant/ toddler mental health. The second component is a stipend allowance to provide agencies who wish to use financial incentives to support the recruitment, hiring, and retention of Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational or Physical Therapists, Child Psychologists and Mental Health Specialists with certifications in infant/toddler mental health. Both components have a two-year minimum service requirement. As part of this agreement, the ADHS shall provide the following services for FIRST THINGS FIRST:

- (a) Oversee and monitor the distribution of loan repayment funds to financial institutions on behalf of contracted Occupational, Physical, and Speech/Language therapists, mental health specialists, psychologists, and pediatricians by specified regions of the state.
- (b) Oversee and monitor the distribution of stipends to therapists willing to commit to working in specified regional communities.

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(c) Assist with the recruitment of therapists from graduate programs into the loan repayment program.

(d) Oversee and monitor the maintenance of service obligations attached to funds distribution.

(e) Agree to follow guidance and procedures regarding the loan repayment and stipend programs as set by FTF.

The cost per professional for **loan forgiveness** is as follows:

Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapists and Psychologists:

Year 1: \$10,000 maximum

Year 2: \$15,000 maximum

Estimated total cost per professional (including 10% administrative cost) is \$27,500.

Physical Therapists

Year 1: \$15,000 maximum

Year 2: \$20,000 maximum

Estimated total cost per professional (including 10% administrative cost) is \$38,500.

Mental Health Specialists/Family Counselors

Year 1: \$5,000 maximum

Year 2: \$7,500 maximum

Estimated total cost per professional (including 10% administrative cost) is \$13,750

The cost per professional for **stipends** is as follows:

Advertising: \$1,000 maximum

Moving Expense: \$3,000 maximum

Sign-on Bonus: \$3,000 maximum

Year 1 Bonus: \$5,000 maximum

Year 2 Bonus \$7,500 maximum

Estimated total cost per professional (including 10% administrative cost) is \$21,450

In order to prepare the agreement with DHS there are several areas the Regional Council will need to consider:

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- Will specific communities be selected?
- Will certain specialties be selected?

Option 2 – An RFGA was released Sept. 14th to identify a statewide Administrative Home to provide Infant and Toddler Mental Health Consultation. Regional Councils can contract with the Administrative Home to provide mental health consultants in the region at a cost of \$100,000 per mental health consultant. Mental health consultation is a problem-solving and capacity-building intervention implemented within a collaborative relationship between a professional consultant with mental health expertise and one or more individuals with other areas of expertise, such as child care center staff and home visitors. Early childhood mental health consultation aims to build the capacity (improve the ability) of staff, families, programs, and systems to prevent, identify, treat, and reduce the impact of mental health problems among children from birth through age five and their families.

Option 3 – Release an RFGA to increase access to affordable health coverage for low income families with children ages 0-5 through outreach and enrollment assistance using Health-E-Arizona. This RFGA could include one or both of the following strategies:

- Inform and train our community providers that interact with families with young children ages 0-5 (e.g. home visitors, court teams, preschools, community health clinics) on the availability and use of the Health-E-Arizona website, and provide technical assistance to support such providers in enrollment and renewal efforts.
- Increase the number of accessible community sites serving families of children ages 0-5 that offer internet access and enrollment assistance in completing the Health-E-Arizona application.

Option 4 – Child Care Health Consultants are nurses trained to support child care programs with health and safety issues. First Things First is contracting primarily with County Health Departments to provide this service. Statewide funding is providing .25 FTE to employ a Child Care Health Consultant for Quality First participants in the La Paz/Mohave Region. The Regional Council could increase this to a full-time position by allocating \$90,000 in regional funding. Child Care Health Consultants provide expert advice, training, information on best practices and policies, and community referrals to providers and parents. Each consultant carries a caseload of 30 centers/homes. The cost per consultant is \$120,000.

Option 5 – Create a new strategy or allocate the funds to another strategy in the plan.

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ADDITIONAL REMAINING FUNDS

\$12,906 remains from the Frontier Adjustment which can be allocated to a new or existing strategy or carried over to next year.